

Minutes of WREN Board Meeting 12th September 2022, Zoom

WREN Board Members present: Chris Coonick, Tony Faragher, Simon Miller, Kevin Smith, Victoria Smyth, Ian Welch

WREN ops assistant: Leonie McGregor (minutes)

Apologies: Francesca Iliffe, Stephen Pennells, Jennifer Roberts.

Meeting started 1930, closed 2130.

The Board approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 13th June 2022.

Matters arising: CEP's offer of a contribution towards the cost of the stand at the Royal Cornwall Show. Whilst the offer has not been discussed again with CEP, it has been made clear to them on a number of occasions that WREN values the relationship and wishes to work more closely with them.

- 1. Arrangements for WREN's AGM 26th September:** Kevin will email the notice and agenda to members and post the requisite documents on the website. Simon will promote the meeting on WREN's social media. The AGM will be via Zoom again this year. The possibility of an in person or blended meeting was considered, as well as adding in a presentation. However it was decided to postpone the idea of a larger event until the outcomes of NZCom can be presented, which is planned to take place in January.
- 2. Approval of annual accounts 2021/22:** The Board approved both the draft accounts and the chair's report. Tony, Kevin and Chris to sign the documents for filing. Kevin had prepared the accounts using Xero software for the first time, and this had worked well. He explained that the figures were significantly larger than last year because of the ongoing project with WPD.
- 3. Developing WREN's strategic plan and future work programme:** Some members of the Board had recently met with Francesca, Stephen and Jennifer who are interested in learning about the work of WREN. The meeting focussed on the challenges of the energy and cost of living crisis, where it was decided to take immediate action in the form of an energy help clinic. It was recognised that formulating the long term aims of WREN require an in depth, in person planning meeting. Tony and Chris will suggest some times by Doodle.
- 4. NZCom update:** Chris gave an update on current progress with the work packages.
 - WP2 (future energy scenarios) is wrapping up now and the report will be available soon.
 - WP3 (carbon accounting methodology) is significantly behind. Despite clear initial specification, the tool that has been developed is not delivering what is required. Planet A has generously agreed to help the project partner to reach the outcomes we are hoping for.
 - WP4 (modelling) Planet A has completed the work. Some data is awaited from WPD, but the invoice is approved for payment.
 - WP5 (business models) CEP is behind due to capacity and the energy crisis. In the meantime they have been asked to share their short list of business models for consideration by others.
 - WP6 (community engagement) see Simon's report below.
 - WP7 (heat pump trial/time of use) the report is currently being reviewed and will be available soon. The next step would be a sandbox trial which requires an energy supplier - WPD are approaching Octopus. Ideally a social housing provider would also partner in this element of the project. Homes with heat pumps installed would need to be identified.

- WP8 (online tool) this is the next significant piece of work. The specification is currently out for tender - any recommendations for local web developers to be sent to Chris.
- The reports from NZCom will be posted on WREN's website.
- Western Power Distribution is its changing name to National Grid Electricity Distribution – invoices to be addressed to the new entity name from now on.

Simon reported on community engagement. He and Tony had run the first walk-in energy clinic last week at the Betjeman Centre where they joined the community companion group. The plan is for WREN to have a presence there every other week (Thursday @2pm) – volunteers from the Board are sought to help run this. The aim is to provide information, and signpost people in the direction of specialist help where needed. The ambition is to provide these clinics in more locations and ideally to reach the most vulnerable people who are struggling in the current situation. Tony suggested that WREN spend some of its funds on commissioning a resource pack for use at these sessions, to include what is currently available in assistance and grant funding. CEP has a set of leaflets and factsheets for WREN to use, and has offered to provide training and support at the sessions once their capacity increases. Once the Board has had a chance to look at the CEP resources a decision will be made on whether these will be sufficient or whether an investment should be made in further research.

It was agreed that the website should be updated with a dedicated page with clear information.

The advisory group is meeting this week.

- 5. University of Exeter 80 hours student internship:** 14 applications were received and a short list of 6 produced. Victoria, Tony and Ian will conduct the interviews on 20th September.
- 6. Request for assistance by Wadebridge Leisure Centre with investigating ground source heating systems:** Amanda Pennington had been in touch to enlist WREN's help with this. It appears the Leisure Centre team may have engaged a specialist already – Tony will contact Amanda to find out.
- 7. Membership of Cornwall Climate Action Network:** Ian had attended the first meeting where introductions were made and the initial aim of collaboration with local groups and bodies discussed. A day-long event is planned, date tbc.
- 8. Affiliation to the Centre for Energy Equality:** The CEE has been set up by Andy Ross, formerly of project partner Frazer Nash. The Board decided that WREN should be affiliated - Chris will email Andy.
- 9. Communications:** A newsletter is being compiled. Any items to be sent in bullet point to Kevin. This edition will signpost WREN's energy clinic and other help organisations. Another "Net Zero Hero" will be featured – more people known to Board members who would fit this category are sought by Simon. Victoria to provide a short biography for the website.
- 10. WREN Environmental Community Fund:** 3 awards were made
 - Camel CSA £8,397 for a community orchard and vegetable store
 - Trevone Village Hall £6,600 for an air source heat pump
 - St Eval archive £4,003 for solar panels and battery storage
- 11. Middle Treworder Community Fund arrangements:** The fund (worth c£15,000) is about to open for applications for the benefit of people living in Wadebridge, Egloshayle, St Kew and St Mabyn. Applications close on 28th October, decisions will be made mid-November.

Other business:

Chris updated the Board on possible changes to government policy following the appointment of a new cabinet.

Frazer Nash has approached WREN as a potential project partner for 2 possible projects they are working up. The Board agreed that Chris should explore the ideas with them and report back to the Board.

NEXT MEETING MONDAY 10th October 7.30 pm on Zoom

(then 14th November, 12th December tbc)